

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

- 1 1. A method, comprising:
 - 2 determining whether a speech option is selected at an origin device; and
 - 3 when the speech option is selected, converting input speech to text and
 - 4 transmitting an instant message comprising the text.
- 1 2. The method of claim 1, further comprising:
 - 2 when speech is not selected at the origin device, receiving input text and
 - 3 transmitting the instant message, wherein the instant message comprises the input text.
- 1 3. The method of claim 2, further comprising:
 - 2 receiving the instant message;
 - 3 determining whether a speech option is selected at a destination device; and
 - 4 when the speech option is selected at the destination device, converting the input
 - 5 text to speech.
- 1 4. The method of claim 1, further comprising:
 - 2 receiving the instant message;
 - 3 determining whether a speech option is selected at a destination device; and
 - 4 when the speech option is selected at the destination device, converting the text to
 - 5 speech.
- 1 5. The method of claim 4, wherein the speech option at the destination device is
- 2 independent of the speech option at the origin device.
- 1 6. A method, comprising:
 - 2 receiving an instant message at a destination-client device, wherein the instant
 - 3 message comprises text; and

4 determining whether a speech option at the destination-client device is selected
5 and if true converting the text to speech.

1 7. The method of claim 6, wherein when the determining operation is false, displaying the
2 text.

1 8. The method of claim 6, wherein the speech option at the destination-client device is
2 independent of a speech option at an origin-client device, wherein the origin-client device
3 originated the instant message.

1 9. The method of claim 6, wherein the instant message is received across a long-lived
2 connection.

1 10. A computing device, comprising:
2 a text-to-speech converter to convert text in a received instant message to speech
3 when a speech option is selected, independent of whether a sender of the instant message
4 performed speech input.

1 11. The computing device of claim 10, further comprising:
2 a speech-to-text converter to convert speech to text in an instant message to be
3 transmitted when the speech option is selected.

1 12. The computing device of claim 9, wherein the received instant message is received
2 across a long-lived connection.

1 13. The computing device of claim 9, wherein the received instant message is received via
2 a request-reply pair.

1 14. An instant-messaging system, comprising:
2 an instant-messaging server;

10 a destination controller to determine whether a destination-speech option is
11 selected at the destination-client device and to receive the instant message from
12 the instant-messaging server, and
13 a text-to-speech converter to convert the text to speech when the
14 destination-speech option is selected.

1 20. The instant-messaging system of claim 19, wherein the origin-speech option is
2 independent of the destination-speech option.

1 21. A signal-bearing medium comprising instructions, wherein the instructions when read
2 and executed by a processor comprise:
3 determining whether a speech option is selected at an origin device; and
4 when the speech option is selected, converting input speech to text and
5 transmitting an instant message to an instant-messaging server, wherein the instant
6 message comprises the text.

1 22. The signal-bearing medium of claim 21, further comprising:
2 when speech is not selected at the origin device, receiving input text and
3 transmitting the instant message to the instant-messaging server, wherein the instant
4 message comprises the input text.

1 23. The signal-bearing medium of claim 21, further comprising:
2 receiving the instant message from the instant-messaging server;
3 determining whether a speech option is selected at a destination device; and
4 when the speech option is selected at the destination device, converting the text to
5 speech.

1 24. The signal-bearing medium of claim 22, further comprising:
2 receiving the instant message from the instant-messaging server;
3 determining whether a speech option is selected at a destination device; and

4 when the speech option is selected at the destination device, converting the input
5 text to speech.

1 25. The signal-bearing medium of claim 23, wherein the speech option at the destination
2 device is independent of the speech option at the origin device.

1 26. A pager, comprising:
2 a text-to-speech converter to convert text in a received instant message to speech
3 when a speech option is selected, independent of whether a sender of the instant message
4 performed speech input.

1 27. The pager of claim 26, further comprising:
2 a speech-to-text converter to convert speech to text in an instant message to be
3 transmitted when the speech option is selected.

1 28. The pager of claim 26, wherein the received instant message is received across a long-
2 lived connection.

1 29. The pager device of claim 26, wherein the received instant message is received via a
2 request-reply pair.